

Published and Copyright (c) 2000  
All Rights Reserved

Atari Online News, Etc.  
A-ONE Online Magazine  
Dana P. Jacobson, Publisher/Managing Editor  
Joseph Mirando, Managing Editor

Atari Online News, Etc. Staff

Dana P. Jacobson -- Editor  
Joe Mirando -- "People Are Talking"  
Michael Burkley -- "Unabashed Atariophile"  
Albert Dayes -- CC: Classic Chips

With Contributions by:

Brian Gudzevich

To subscribe to A-ONE, send a message to: [dpj@delphi.com](mailto:dpj@delphi.com)  
and your address will be added to the distribution list.  
To unsubscribe from A-ONE, send the following: Unsubscribe A-ONE  
Please make sure that you include the same address that you used to  
subscribe from.

To download A-ONE, set your browser bookmarks to one of the  
following sites:

<http://people.delphi.com/dpj/a-one.htm>  
<http://www.icwhen.com/aone/>  
<http://almag.atari.org>

Visit the Atari Advantage Forum on Delphi!  
<http://forums.delphi.com/m/main.asp?sigdir=atari>

=~==~==

A-ONE #0205

02/04/00

~ People Are Talking! ~ Windows Millennium! ~ On The Prowl!  
~ Congress Mulls Tax Ban ~ Web Names Fight Drags! ~ The Web's Top 10!  
~ AOL Interference Suit! ~ Congress Raps Security ~ 'Willamette'!  
~ Join The Hate AOL Club ~ Woman Sues DoubleClick ~ Wireless Internet

-\* Web Users - Cash To Surf Web \*-  
-\* Kodak Launches Digital Film Service \*-  
-\* Freemac Reinvents Itself After iMac Snub! \*-

=~==~==

->From the Editor's Keyboard

"Saying it like it is!"

\*\*\*\*\*

Hey, how about those oil prices!! I'm tellin' ya, no matter what, the consumer gets the bite everywhere you go these days. Unbelievable! My father had left me an e-mail late last week that he had just received a fill-up. His rate was \$1.64 a gallon - without his senior citizen discount! I told him that I was due for a fill in a few days; I'd compare prices. Well, I got my oil Monday. The 'ticket' said \$1.82 a gallon! I mean this was ridiculous! With our weather, a tank of oil will likely last us a month, maybe a week or two more depending on the temperatures. Almost \$400 for a month of heat. Needless to say, my father didn't feel as bad any longer! A day or two later, I started to wonder whether or not when we moved into the house and contracted an oil dealer if I had locked into a price. Before I could find the contract, I got the bill for the oil delivery. Fortunately, I was one of the lucky ones; I had locked in at a lower price three years ago. My price was a paltry \$0.899 a gallon. I felt fine for a few hours until I saw reports on the news showing how some people were handling their heat, or lack of it. Seeing the elderly and "poor" bundling up in their own homes to stay warm was heart-wrenching.

I'll be the first to say that I support foreign aid, but to a point. When people in our own land are homeless, cold, and hungry - there's no excuse for it. If you're one of the lucky ones like I am, I hope you're home, warm, and still have some money in your bank account when Spring rolls around again!

Sorry, I haven't ranted for a few weeks, but this just was something that stuck in my craw. I won't let it happen again, for a little while, anyway.  
<grin>

Until next time...

=~==~==

PEOPLE ARE TALKING  
compiled by Joe Mirando  
jmirando@portone.com

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. It's been yet another busy week, and we are just now starting to get back to something resembling normal after the passing of my mother-in-law. It's still tough, but when you have no choice but to get back to normal, that's what you do.

I've installed a new Linux distribution on my PC laptop, and I like it a lot. The only problem has been getting the new installation to recognize the laptop's modem. I've tried several different things to get it to work, and have even enlisted the help of a couple of Linux users, but I haven't had any luck as of yet.

Despite this problem I've got to say that if you're running Linux on a PC now you should take a look at the Mandrake 7.0 distribution. It's much a much more polished package than any of the others that I've looked at and it comes with tons of software that make using the package both fun and productive.

Now, as far as my adventures with Linux on the TT, I must say that I'm a bit disappointed. While the TOS or MagiC on the TT is very responsive and comfortable, Linux slogs along in tortoise-like fashion. It's not really the fault of the OS. It is what it is: a mature, powerful operating system that uses the power of the computer to its fullest extent. Unfortunately, that doesn't leave much speed for incidentals like quick response.

To be fair, I haven't really finished putting it through its paces, and there are a lot of things to be configured, so maybe I'm being a bit to quick to judge. I guess only time will tell.

Okay, let's get to the STuff from the UseNet...

From the comp.sys.atari.st Newsgroup  
=====

As if he had known that I was going to mention Linux on my TT, Mark van Meurs posts:

"Not so long I got an Atari TT030 from a friend of mine. Another friend told me there are linux disks for the 68030 processor. So I repartitioned the HD with a linux tool (atari-fdisk) and installed linux (Debian).

But when it was almost completely installed I came to the conclusion that linux couldn't be placed in the boot sector of my Atari HD so it was necessary to keep a little space on the hard drive for TOS/GEM. From this space I should be able to start a little program which boots linux.

I wasn't very happy, 'cause by now I knew I had to do the installation all over again. But okay, I like a challenge. So I took a little TOS/GEM utility I saved just before I partitioned my hard disk, called HDX. HDX formatted my hard disk and after that I used it to repartition my hard disk again. When I quit the program my Atari automatically rebooted. When finished booting I came to the conclusion there still wasn't a hard disk present. Then I remembered I had another little utility which I somehow thought would be capable of making my HD usable. This utility was called HINSTALL, but when I ran this program it told me there was no logical drive present. Can somebody please help me? I by now don't have clue anymore of how to make my hard disk work."

Lonny Pursell tells Mark:

"Just copy AHDI.PRG to /auto on a floppy. Boot this floppy making sure that ahdi.prg runs. Then run Hinstall.prg. Hinstall.prg will not see any partitions until the driver ahdi.prg is loaded first."

John Garone posts:

"According to Regis and "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire", the name Atari

roughly translates to "prepare to be attacked" in Japanese!

No elaboration on that, the company or the computer. Anyone know if Atari was a Japanese company at first?"

John replies:

"Ahh! Interesting. So how many hands has the company passed through?"

Ken Macdonald tells John:

"As far as I recall, Bushnell, then Time?-Warner, then Tramiel, then some hard drive company, then Hasbro."

Laurence Shields asks for info on putting a hard drive into his Mega STe:

"I have read that my Mega STe has an internal SCSI interface. Does that mean I can replace my built-in 50MB drive with any (internal) SCSI drive? Would I need to do anything special?"

Phil Walding tells Laurence:

"(It) Shouldn't be a problem. I replaced mine with a 100meg Maxtor and later a 1.2gig (can't remember the brand).

Only problem I had with the 1.2 gig was ICD software wouldn't format / partition it. I had to do that with Diamond Edge (? - something from Oregon Research anyway).

On another tack, I know Oregon updated the software after my release and added support for newer drives / media. Anyone know if there are any update options still floating around?

I see The updates for Neodesk and Geneva are still out there, so maybe ..."

This must be "Linux Week" or something. Now "Max" posts:

"My TT030 is now up-and-running. As an OS I now use Debian Linux. What I wondered was: 'how do I hook this thing up to my network?' Of course I noticed the LAN port on the side of my Atari, but that connector is completely new to me (as a network connector). Does anybody know how I can make an adapter LAN port <-> Ethernet BNC ???? Or where I can get one?"

John Garone tells Max:

"I've used 'Flash' for my Falcon and 'Interlink' for my ST. Both have selectable terminal emulations. Not sure where to get a demo!"

John Garone asks:

"Regarding CAB 2.7, if a text file is loaded which contains a URL address, should that address show as the color selected and clickable? It shows that way in Newsie (.94) downloads but not in CAB!"

Martin-Eric Racine tells John:

"NEWSie parses the original text for anything that looks like a URL, while CAB is a simply an HTML parser; if there is no HTML anchor, there

won't be any link."

Chris Crosskey asks:

"Can anyone tell me if I'm going mad?,....I could have sworn that somewhere I had seen a MIDI file player for the STe that played back using the onboard sound hardware.....A bit like the Falcon one from Softjee..... Can anyone else remember seeing it, and if so a URL would be appreciated.."

Shiuming Lai tells Chris:

"You are probably thinking of EPSS by Copson (Zero-X fame). There is a demo on some FTP sites, but it's no longer a supported product. It was originally made to replay the music of Unit 17's (demo crew) musician, who could only work with MIDI, and not trackers. The EPSS system was used in a few demos like Dynamite and Jam House, and evolved into a fully commercial product.

To achieve MIDI playing with internal synthesis required a few compromises, such as limited MIDI command support, and boosting the bass and treble to maximum in order to compensate the loss of dynamic range from mixing so many voices into those two 8-bit D/A channels. However, it did work well within its limits, from what I saw."

Didier Briel adds:

"PHPlayer (from William Wong) does exactly what you describe. As an STE is not exactly the ultimate in raw power, some MIDI files will play better than others, but for some, it works.

`http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/6880/phsw.html` Following this link, you will need to download also additional Samples (it's explained in the documentation) if you want more than a piano sound.

If you want to use additional sounds, a hard drive is recommended."

Guillaume Defache adds his thoughts:

"Try the Probe House Player (can play MIDI as well as samples):

<http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/6880/phplyr.html>

So feel relieved, you are not mad (yet)!"

Well folks, that's it for this week. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

$$= \sim = \sim = \sim =$$

->In This Week's Gaming Section - 'Wacky Races'! 'Crazy Taxi'!  
 " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " PSX Railroad Tycoon II

$$= \sim = \sim = \sim =$$

Driving on Rooftops and Sidewalks is Totally  
Legal in "Crazy Taxi," Where the Only Moving

## Violation is Not Moving Out of the Way

Don't even bother buckling up! Sega of America, Inc. Thursday announced the release of ''Crazy Taxi'' for the 128-bit, Internet-ready Sega Dreamcast videogame console. Based on the smash arcade hit, ''Crazy Taxi'' challenges gamers to race their taxi against the clock and drive customers to their destinations - but it's not as easy as it sounds. This game is jam-packed with insane obstacles and fast action, challenging gamers to dodge and dash quickly throughout the city to earn the best tip. ''Crazy Taxi'' features amazingly detailed 3D graphics and is loaded with cool new exclusive features, including an all-new interactive course and more than a dozen challenging mini-games. The title will be available at retailers nationwide starting February 2 for \$49.95.

In ''Crazy Taxi," players assume the role of one of four off-beat taxi cab drivers (Axel, Gus, Gena and B.D. Joe) who must pick up passengers waiting anywhere from rooftops to sidewalks to underwater wearing scuba masks. The highly interactive 3D environments are loaded with real-life imagery, including franchises such as Pizza Hut, KFC and Levi Strauss, in addition to detailed backgrounds that look incredibly realistic. Although players earn fares by getting passengers to their destination without too many mishaps, earning tips requires creative wheelwork, so players need to take shortcuts.

In this game, ''crazy" is the key word. Time is money, so gamers can launch their taxi off a second story parking lot or fly down a set of stairs at ridiculous speeds to save time. Since there isn't a ''pre-set" route to follow, gamers are encouraged to take their driving skills to the limit by driving on sidewalks, rooftops, cafes, lawns and department stores.

It's all fair game in this game --the more destruction and chaos caused, the higher the score. Other cars on the street may smash gamers' taxis into a side rail, causing them to spin out of control, so gamers need to be aggressive.

Drive the wrong way down a one-way street, plow through restaurants or swerve in and out of traffic. The only bad thing players can do is not go fast enough!

''Thanks to Sega's deep arcade roots, gamers can play some of the best titles from the arcades, with new exclusive additions, on Sega Dreamcast," said Charles Bellfield, director of marketing communications, Sega of America. ''''Crazy Taxi' is so graphically advanced that it's hard to believe Sega Dreamcast's second generation software coming this year will look even better."

Several ''crazy" moves need to be perfected in order to garner the maximum tip from passengers, and gamers will in turn be rewarded for making their ride thrilling. Crazy Jump uses ramps or other insane obstacles to get the taxi airborne, while Crazy Drift is used to sustain a sliding drift of the cab while turning. A Crazy Through move cuts in close to other vehicles that gamers can pass on the roads without crashing. Crazy Dash and Crazy Back Dash cause the cab to quickly move forward or in reverse. The Crazy Back Drift move allows the cab to move in reverse after spinning 180(Degree) -- talk about crazy!

Three main modes are built into the game: Arcade, Original and Crazy Box modes. Arcade mode brings all the best from the original hit, while

utilizing the powerful Sega Dreamcast engine to enhance and expand the 3D graphics. Original mode adds an entirely new, larger course to weave through, in which players might even get lost and find different ways of getting to the same destination, thus increasing the replay value. Crazy Box mode gives players the opportunity to master the previously mentioned crazy maneuvers that are essential to generating high scores.

Taking passengers on these wild missions becomes even more entertaining with the amazing punk rock soundtrack. Players can screech, jump and plow through crowded city streets while rocking out to the tunes of Offspring and Bad Religion.

The Visual Memory Unit and Jump Pack are two Sega Dreamcast accessories that can be used to enhance the gaming experience. Game data and player files for up to 4 players can be stored on the VMU, while the Jump Pack provides force feedback in the controller. "Crazy Taxi" will be available at retailers nationwide and on sega.com for \$49.95.

Eidos Interactive's Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver  
for the Sega Dreamcast Now Shipping

Eidos Interactive announced last week that Soul Reaver: Legacy of Kain is now shipping for the Sega Dreamcast.

The critically acclaimed Sega Dreamcast version features exclusive graphical enhancements over other versions of the game and also boasts an incredible 60 frames per second throughout. Eidos developer, Crystal Dynamics, has taken the time to make sure that their newest franchise receives special attention and gives gamers a new, unique experience.

Gamers assume the role of Raziel, a vampire who must feed on the souls of his undead brethren as he stalks the material and spectral planes of existence seeking to destroy his creator, Kain, in this epic 3D action adventure sequel to the hot-selling Legacy of Kain: Blood Omen.

Eidos Vice President of Marketing, Paul Baldwin stated: "We are extremely excited to bring the Legacy of Kain series to the Sega Dreamcast. The enhanced graphics and processing power of the Dreamcast bring the world of Nosgoth to a new level of beauty and will immerse the player in a fantasy world like no other."

Pre-sell numbers of the game have been very high as the game nears its shipping date.

Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. Set to Ship  
Rockstar Games' Wild Metal for Sega Dreamcast

Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. announced Tuesday that its Rockstar Games division has shipped Wild Metal, its first Sega Dreamcast title, to retail this week. Wild Metal is set to bring futuristic, interplanetary combat to the Sega Dreamcast with an impressive physics engine, twenty-one vast and spectacular levels to do battle with seventeen mechanical menaces, beasts and bosses, the most insane and innovative weapons assortment ever assembled, and a fierce selection of split-screens multiplayer modes to



choose from.

''Wild Metal is one of the most eye catching and innovative games to be released for Sega Dreamcast," stated Sam Houser, president of Rockstar Games. ''With its incredible physics system, non-linear gameplay, ferocious multiplayer modes, and breathtaking levels to explore and battle upon, Wild Metal is a must-have for Sega Dreamcast owners."

In the November 1999 issue of Official Sega Dreamcast Magazine, Wild Metal was praised as ''a bombastic action-strategy game."

Wild Metal possesses ''massive environments and a fantastic physics engine" according to leading video game industry publication, Next-Gen.Dailyradar.com states, ''Wild Metal may provide Sega's new console with its first taste of unbridled tank-on-tank shooting - something that it's desperately lacked since its American debut.'

Wild Metal for Sega Dreamcast allows gamers to play as both the hunter and the hunted in this psychologically thrilling action / shooter. Utilizing mechanical beasts of destruction, gamers will have to employ extreme stealth tactics and pure animal instinct to survive and outwit their enemies as you explore the beautiful landscapes of the Tehric system - Tundra, the Aztec Desert and the Red Planet. The goal is to locate and collect eight different power cores over twenty-one levels on the three unique planetary surfaces. With your choice of five futuristic combat vehicles, you'll be armed with an innovative weapons assortment and support helicopters. Prepare yourself for the battle against the odds to unite the power cores, save the human race, and to destroy the mechanical menaces that have decimated the human population. Engage the enemy solo or play against an opponent in split-screen head-to-head battle while you frag your opponents on the vast alien landscape. Hunt or be hunted. Kill or Be Killed. Reclaim the Future for Mankind!

LucasArts to Release Star Wars: Episode I Racer  
as First Title for Sega Dreamcast

High-Speed Racing Game to Include Ability to Post  
Top Scores through the Sega Dreamcast Network

LucasArts Entertainment Company LLC announced Monday that it will release the critical and commercial hit interactive game Star Wars: Episode I Racer for Sega Dreamcast in spring 2000. Star Wars: Racer for Sega Dreamcast is the only console version of the game featuring stunning high-resolution graphics and dramatic prerendered cut scenes.

Additionally, players will be able to take advantage of the Sega Dreamcast Network to post high scores to the Internet and compare notes on who is the best Podracer in the galaxy.

Star Wars: Racer brings all the intensity and high-speed thrills of the Podracing sequence from the motion picture Star Wars: Episode I The Phantom Menace. The game dares players to take control of sleek and blindingly fast Podracers in a series of electrifying and dangerous races throughout the Star Wars galaxy. Inspired by Anakin Skywalker's epic race against the nefarious Sebulba in the motion picture's Boonta Eve Classic, the game challenges players to compete in the perilous outlaw sport of Podracing, where the object is to win at all costs.

Each Podracer is propelled by two massive jet engines and controlled from a small cockpit that hovers behind, connected by 15-foot cables. Speed is the name of the game in Star Wars: Racer as the lightning quick vehicles are capable of reaching simulated speeds of up to 600 miles per hour, while skimming a mere 4 feet above the ground.

''Star Wars: Racer lets players relive all the speed and exhilaration of the film's do-or-die Podracing sequence," says Tom Byron, product marketing manager for LucasArts. ''Sega Dreamcast allows us to achieve a high level of realism that convincingly immerses game players into one of the most amazing moments in Star Wars history."

''We are pleased to welcome LucasArts aboard as a third party publisher for Sega Dreamcast and are excited to see their debut on the system with such a stellar title as Star Wars: Episode I Racer," says Neal Robison, group director for third party, Sega of America. ''We look forward to additional titles from LucasArts that continue to take videogaming to the next level, while taking advantage of Sega Dreamcast's superior technical abilities."

Star Wars: Racer allows players to contend as Anakin, reigning champion Sebulba, or more than 22 other Podracer pilots in the ultra-competitive multi-race Galactic Circuit, or jump right into single race mode. Each beautifully detailed Podracing vehicle can be upgraded with a variety of parts to increase acceleration, cool engine boosters, and enhance maneuverability.

Offering more than 21 race courses spread among eight worlds, Star Wars: Racer is highlighted by a faithful recreation of the treacherous Tatooine circuit, site of the Boonta Eve Classic. Each track features a variety of potential hazards unique to the world's environment, such as methane lakes, meteor showers and Tusken Raiders. One course is located on Oovo IV, a prison mining colony. The mine transports ore through anti-gravity tunnels, which Podracers must negotiate at break-neck speeds while dodging giant rocks that are hurling toward them. Another track is based around a volcano where pilots race over rivers of searing lava forcing them to make split-second course corrections. All courses feature a variety of branches and shortcuts that clever Podracers will learn to use to their advantage in order to win.

Star Wars: Racer features the voice of Jake Lloyd, who portrays Anakin Skywalker in Star Wars: Episode I The Phantom Menace. The game's powerful vehicle sound effects and stirring soundtrack are taken directly from the motion picture, as well.

The PC and Nintendo 64 versions of Star Wars: Racer were overwhelmingly successful upon their release in spring 1999. The PC version was among the three best selling games in its first five weeks of availability, according to software sales tracking firm PC Data. Star Wars: Racer for N64 was the number one console title in June 1999, as reported by NPD/TRST.

#### Gamers Start Your Engines: Acclaim Announces Vanishing Point For The PlayStation Game Console

Acclaim Entertainment announced development of Vanishing Point, a new arcade-style, ''every man for himself" racing game for the PlayStation game console set for release in Spring 2000. Developed by Clockwork Games,

Vanishing Point is the only racing game that lets aspiring speed freaks combine stunt-based and realistic driving action in over 30 licensed road cars. A Sega Dreamcast(TM) version will follow this Fall.

"Vanishing Point is poised to set the new benchmark in arcade-style racing games," said Tom Bass, marketing manager at Acclaim Entertainment.

"Vanishing Point boasts highly advanced vehicle dynamics, 3D graphics, opponent AI and an unprecedented game engine developed in collaboration with engineers from the today's top automakers. Gamers will be amazed at the in-depth racing experience and no self-respecting driver can resist taking their favorite road car for a test drive on the game's intense stunt courses!"

Once buckled into Vanishing Point, gamers will have a choice of cars from two showrooms loaded with high-end vehicles including models by BMW and Lotus as well as everyday driving cars such as a Ford Explorer, and even an oil tanker! Speed demons then hit the streets competing for the best racing time in eight single player tracks and eight two-player tracks. While racing for the best time, gamers will combat an extensive real-time traffic system featuring a highly-competitive opponent AI. Vanishing Point's ingenious engine boasts absolutely no scenery pop-up and no fogging to impede racing action. Finally, in addition to the single and two-player racing modes, Vanishing Point includes a Stunt Driver mode that features stunt courses specifically designed to test the limits of players' driving abilities as well as a league-play multiplayer mode for up to eight people.

Along with its incredible graphics and race courses, Vanishing Point features unprecedented vehicle physics, which accurately model everything from gearbox ratios, to roll-bars, to shock damping and more for each individual car. With one quick trip to the in-game Tune-Up Shop and advice from the online help system, gamers can adjust each vehicle's physics as preferred then head off to race or tear-up the stunt courses.

#### Hasbro Interactive Announces Alliance With Saban Entertainment to Develop NASCAR Racers Interactive Games

Hasbro Interactive announced Wednesday that it is teaming with Saban Entertainment to bring the new animated Fox television series NASCAR RACERS to interactive games for the Sony PlayStation and the PC. NASCAR RACERS, debuting in February, creates a world of futuristic NASCAR racing, where kids can become supersonic speed stars by participating in the adventures of their favorite characters from the show.

"Saban Entertainment has envisioned the future of NASCAR racing and is introducing children to it with this new TV series," said Tom Dusenberry, president of Hasbro Interactive. "This property lends itself well to interactive games, because of its fast-paced NASCAR action."

"Hasbro Interactive has proven itself a leader in the action-adventure interactive landscape -- and has proven itself a terrific ally for Fox Kids/Saban and the NASCAR RACERS brand," said Elie Dekel, President, Saban Consumer Products. "This is a great way to extend the NASCAR RACERS experience."

NASCAR RACERS for the Sony PlayStation and PC is based on the animated television series by the same name, which will begin airing weekly on February 5, 2000, on the Fox Kids Network. Featuring high-speed action and

cutting edge animation, NASCAR RACERS introduces four young heroes for a new generation: Mark ``Charger" McCutchen, Megan ``Spitfire" Fassler, Steve ``Flyer" Sharp and Carlos ``Stunts" Rey. Utilizing the most realistic and stimulating computer animation available, the futuristic series presents state-of-the-art racing cars that can perform stunts and adapt to the unique style of each individual driver.

The NASCAR RACERS interactive games will allow players to participate in the television show's NASCAR Unlimited Racing Division and features three modes of play (Adventure Mode, Single Player Mode and Two Player Challenge Mode), eight of the show's futuristic tracks, and eight different cars (four from each of the two teams featured in the TV series).

Hasbro Interactive plans to release both NASCAR RACERS games this fall and will showcase them during American International Fair in New York City on February 13-17, 2000.

Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. Announces the  
Development of Two Sony PlayStation 2 Games

Getaway and Midnight Club From Award-winning  
Angel Studios Coming to PlayStation 2 This Fall

Rockstar Games, Take Two Interactive Software, Inc.'s high end video game publishing division, is pleased to announce it is developing two games for Sony's PlayStation2 gaming system in conjunction with the award-winning Angel Studios, Inc. Midnight Club: Street Racing and Getaway are being developed for Sony's next generation console system, and should be available this fall.

Angel Studios is the award-winning developer of Microsoft's Midtown Madness and Nintendo's Ken Griffey's Sluggfest series of Major League Baseball games. Angel Studios is an official middleware developer for Sony's PlayStation 2.

Midnight Club: Street Racing is a game based around illegal street racing. Players drive performance enhanced cars around busy city streets until they are challenged by another member of the illusive Midnight Club, and race at breakneck speeds through the city. Set in realistic, incredibly detailed, three-dimensional models of the world's greatest cities, Midnight Club: Street Racing will feature single and multiplayer modes, many different vehicles and some of the greatest car tuning shops in the world.

Getaway is an open plan racing game in which players have to deliver contraband across borders while being chased by the police and other smuggling operations. Set in a variety of rural environments, with an incredible new panoramic perspective, the game has a phenomenal physics engine to faithfully recreate the speed and sensations of tearing across the country, through farms, fences and forests while trying to outrun a variety of enemies. Getaway also introduces to driving titles fully interactive supporting non-player characters, which the player can use to distract and attack his pursuers.

Diego Angel, president of Angel Studios, commented ``Rockstar's edgy, informed style blends beautifully with our artistic slant and unique technology. The opportunity to be involved with PlayStation 2 development early on in the system's life cycle remains a tremendous thrill for Angel

Studios."

Sam Houser, president of Rockstar Games, said, "We are very pleased to be making two complimentary driving titles with Angel Studios for the PlayStation 2. The development teams at Angel are one of the acknowledged masters of creating great driving physics models and groundbreaking games. Midnight Club: Street Racing is a title we have always wanted to make, while Getaway represents a new dynamic in driving games. Angel Studios is an official middleware developer for PlayStation 2, so they fully understand how to get the most out of this incredible machine."

Infogrames North America, Inc. Announces Wacky  
Races, the Zaniest Prank-Pulling Cartoon Racing  
Game for Summer 2000

Wacky Races Cartoon Characters Reunite for a  
Crazy Cartoon Racing Extravaganza

Start your engines!

Infogrames North America, Inc. announced Monday that it is bringing the wild characters from the popular Wacky Races cartoon to life in a new racing game for Sega Dreamcast, Sony PlayStation, PC and Game Boy Color to reach retail stores this summer.

Join Penelope Pitstop, Dick Dastardly, his sidekick Muttley, and others in Wacky Races, featuring crazy cars, characters, and lots of pranks to provide hours of pure racing pleasure.

Players will be thrown into the driver's seat of several different kooky vehicles, such as The Slag Brothers' Boulder-Mobile, capable of going off-roading and crashing into small obstacles without even slowing down! As in the cartoon, players are encouraged to win the race by any means necessary. To assist them in this task, the various bumpy tracks will be filled with challenging jumps, bonuses, and traps.

"Wacky Races offers players a new twist on the arcade racing and cart racing genre with the added bonus of pulling hysterical pranks on opponents on your way to the finish line," said Larry Lee, director of marketing for Infogrames North America, Inc.'s Family Label.

"Novice gamers will find the game easy to learn, while advanced competitors will find the possible combinations of vehicles, tracks, and terrain types challenging and exciting."

Players can choose from such game modes as Arcade, Championship, Time Trial, Endurance, and Versus. In each mode, players will try to trip each other up with a variety of absurd gadgets and weapons that are picked up along the way, producing silly cartoon conflicts between cars.

Race as fast as you can around the tracks in Arcade mode because you'll need to finish in one of the top three places to move on to the next race. Earn points throughout all nine tracks and see who wins overall in Championship mode. Time Trial mode challenges players to try to finish in the fastest time possible. Endurance mode is possibly the greatest challenge for a Wacky Racer.

The vehicle in last place at the end of each lap is eliminated from the race and the most ruthless daredevil wins! In Versus mode on Dreamcast, up to four players get to battle each other. The last wacky vehicle remaining wins!

Developed by three different teams, the Dreamcast version is being produced by Infogrames' Sheffield House, the PlayStation and PC versions will be made by Appaloosa and the development team of Velez & Dubail are creating the Game Boy Color title.

Eidos Interactive is Bringing the Hit Title Sword  
of the Berserk: Guts' Rage to U.S. Shores on the  
Sega Dreamcast

Eidos Interactive has acquired the publishing rights for the critically acclaimed Japanese Sega Dreamcast title, Berserk. The U.S. version of the game will be known as Sword of the Berserk: Guts' Rage and is scheduled to ship in March.

Sword of the Berserk: Guts' Rage is an action/brawler that features some of the most beautiful visuals to date on the Sega Dreamcast in addition to an intense and engrossing storyline that unfolds over the course of play. Originally a popular comic that started in the 70's, Berserk has built an incredible fan base around the world and the video game conversion has proven to be a great success overseas.

Gamers will assume the role of Guts, a mercenary in search of a cure for his girlfriend's madness. Traveling across the countryside, Guts stumbles upon a village that has fallen victim to a horrible plague. In order to get to the root of the evil, Guts must hack and slash his way through hundreds of enemies and terrifying bosses in order to lift the plague and restore the land. Guts' arsenal includes a gigantic sword, an arm mounted automatic crossbow, throwing knives, an arm cannon, and grenades. Accompanied by an incredible soundtrack, *Sword of the Berserk: Guts' Rage* delivers hours of mature gameplay with numerous secrets to keep gamers coming back for more.

Eidos' North American VP of Product Development, Nick Earl states ``We are incredibly excited to publish this title in the U.S. It's not often that unique Japanese Dreamcast titles make their way to our shores and we are embracing the opportunity to keep the integrity of this title intact."

GameFan.com states, "Now that I've played through the game a few times, I think I can safely say that Berserk has become one of my top five favorite Dreamcast games." 89 out of 100.

From Videogames.com, "This is one of the most impressive-sounding games ever made. From the first time you hear the sound of (Guts') sword cutting through the air, you'll be amazed."

==~==~==~==

AtariNews: On The Prowl  
January 31, 2000

AtariNews is back! There's been a lot of news since the last issue, from new Lynx games to the progress of BattleSphere. There're even some new Atari 2600 ROMs available free of charge and new classic game remakes to look out for. New Jaguar games have shipped as well. Keep watching your email, because AtariNews is back to stay.

SOCCER KID FOR THE ATARI JAGUAR IS NOW AVAILABLE

On Monday, January 24, Atari Jaguar Soccer Kid pre-orders began shipping to USA customers. This is the second of four Songbird Productions Jaguar games, the first one being Protector. Hyper Force and the very anticipated Skyhammer are still to come. The international orders for Soccer Kid will be shipping soon. For information about these and other Songbird games, please visit Songbird Productions at its new address.

<http://songbird.atari.net>

WHAT DOES 2000 BRING FOR THE JAGUAR?

Many people are asking this. What games will we see? Well, here's what we expect to see this year. Songbird Productions will be releasing two more Jaguar games, Hyper Force and Skyhammer. 4Play will be releasing BattleSphere later this year. OMC Games should have The Assassin, an RPG for the Jaguar CD this year as well. More games may be announced later this year, although companies such as Telegames have yet to release any news of more Jaguar development. For more information, check out the links below:

Songbird Productions:  
<http://songbird.atari.net>

BattleSphere Update Page, part of Thunderbirds Garage:  
<http://home.sprynet.com/~thunderbird/bsphere.html>

OMC Games:  
<http://www.omcgames.com>

Telegames:  
<http://www.telegames.com>

LYNX LIBRARY EXPANDS IN 2000

Many more Lynx games are coming this year! Songbird has four software titles coming our way. The first of which is Crystal Mines II: Buried Treasure, an expansion for your existing Crystal Mines 2 cartridge. Songbird also recently acquired full rights and source code to three unreleased Lynx games from Beyond Games. The games are Cybervirus, Ultra Vortex, and Mechtiles. Cybervirus is expected to be completed and published later in 2000. The other two are not yet scheduled for release. Harry Dodgson will be releasing Othello in February through Video 61. This port of the classic board game includes multiple play modes plus excellent graphics and audio.

Songbird Productions:  
<http://songbird.atari.net>

Video 61  
<http://www.atarisales.com>

#### THE ALL NEW ATARI

Atari, now under the ownership of Hasbro Interactive, is back developing games again. Although not the same as in the past, where they were only Atari systems. Today they develop on the PC and other console systems. They have been mostly developing classic game remakes from Atari's past, as well as other developers. These games include Atari Arcade Hits, Missile Command, Q\*bert, The Next Tetris, and even Pong! They are also developing original games like Nerf Arena Blast. Some of the games in development are Star Raiders and Galaga. Atari is far from gone, more is on the way.

[www.atari.com](http://www.atari.com)

#### PROTOTYPE ATARI 2600 GAMES AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD

Two proto 2600 games were recently released for free distribution over the internet. The first is Garfield, based on the popular comic strip. It was developed by Steve Woita, who also developed Taz and Quadrun. The second game is Sky Patrol by Brad Johnson, who was more than happy to pass along this game to classic gamers. Both games can be downloaded from the Classic Gaming Expo website

<http://www.cgexpo.com>

#### BATTLESPHERE ALMOST READY FOR ENCRYPTION

The BattleSphere encryption process is almost done. If all goes as 4Play plans, BattleSphere will be ready for the next step in a few weeks. Thunderbird of 4Play has set up a series of Jaguars to try every possible encryption code for BattleSphere, and they are just about out of possibilities. Once this is complete, BattleSphere can go into production.

<http://home.sprynet.com/~thunderbird/bsphere.html>

#### CLASSIC GAMING EXPO 1999 VIDEO STILL AVAILABLE

The Classic Gaming Expo '99 video is still available if you haven't got a copy yet. You can purchase it from Mark Santora, the producer of the video for \$30 including shipping to anywhere in the USA. Outside of the US is \$27 US dollars plus shipping. You can order it at the address below.

<http://home.earthlink.net/~santora/cgevideo.html>

#### ATARI 2600/7800 MONITOR CART HAS GONE BACK INTO PRODUCTION

The monitor cart, a low end development system, has gone back into production. The cart has 6KB of RAM battery backed up for any 2600 game you develop, and 16KB of RAM for the 7800. This cart was produced under license from Atari. Video 61 now has the rights to this cart, please visit them at the address below for more information.

<http://www.atarisales.com>



## CLASSIC GAMING HITS THE GAME BOY COLOR

Although it's not an Atari system, you can play many classic Atari games on Nintendo's Game Boy Color. These include excellent classics such as Asteroids, Centipede, Missile Command, Pitfall, Pong, and Yars' Revenge. Game Boy Color also features classics by other companies like Bubble Bobble, Frogger, and Space Invaders. Check these games out at Nintendo's home page.

<http://www.nintendo.com>

## ATARINEWS NEEDS YOUR HELP

Do you know of any news related to Atari in any way? Send the news to [atarian@mediaone.net](mailto:atarian@mediaone.net). We plan to get an issue of AtariNews out at least once a month, so if you know any news that you think other Atarians should know, send it in today!

[atarian@mediaone.net](mailto:atarian@mediaone.net)

Send any comments or submissions for "AtariNews: On The Prowl" to:  
Brian Gudzevich (Editor) at: [Atarian@mediaone.net](mailto:Atarian@mediaone.net)

~~~~~

A-ONE's Headline News  
The Latest in Computer Technology News  
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

## Fight Over Web Names Drags On

America's surging technology industry changes so quickly, so profoundly that it's said to move in "Internet time," a sort of nebulous parallel universe where years of evolution take mere months.

But curiously, the Internet itself appears largely immune to Internet time.

Important changes to its architecture, such as adding new suffixes for Web addresses, remain at least one year away, despite pledges since the middle of the last decade to change the arcane system that generally limits non-government Web sites to addresses ending with ".com," ".net" or ".org."

How about [www.ap.news](http://www.ap.news)? Or [www.smithsonian.museum](http://www.smithsonian.museum)? Or [www.ford.cars](http://www.ford.cars)?

What's taking so long?

The problem, experts acknowledge, is the strange confluence of interests in today's Internet - the increasingly important network that crosses borders and spans cultures yet is largely run by volunteer geeks loosely scattered around the globe.

So far, the most forceful and successful arguments against expanding Internet addresses, called "domains," are from the world's most powerful

corporations. Some jealously guard their trademarks and complain that the current system already is too awkward to police.

A single large company might believe it has to register hundreds of Web site addresses to stem "cybersquatters," the speculators of the Internet age who reserve popular addresses and resell them for profit.

But there also are other, more technical arguments: How many to add? Which ones? Who controls them? Who sells these new addresses? Who decides disputes?

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, a nonprofit group based in Los Angeles, was handed authority in September 1998 by the U.S. government to oversee the Internet's domain name system.

But ICANN has been mired since its creation in a bitter, expensive fight over its charter and over allowing new companies to sell Web addresses ending in ".com," ".net" and ".org" - a lucrative opportunity that had belonged under an exclusive government contract to Network Solutions Inc. in northern Virginia.

Network Solutions and ICANN largely settled their dispute months ago under an agreement praised as a landmark in the 30-year history of the Internet. Under the deal, Network Solutions remains keeper of the master list of current commercial Web addresses for at least four more years in exchange for paying \$1.25 million to ICANN, which now can turn its attention to adding these new Web addresses.

"It's a very important decision," said David Post, who teaches at Temple University and is co-founder of the Cyberspace Law Institute. "In a sense, it's the most important decision that ICANN faces, really."

ICANN will discuss new Internet suffixes during a meeting in March in Cairo but won't take any action at least until later this year.

"We'll get a much better sense in Cairo whether there is grounds for consensus that will allow the board to move, or whether we're still at an unstable stage," said Andrew McLaughlin, a senior adviser to ICANN and its chief financial officer.

He predicted new addresses possibly by year's end, then added: "Maybe next year is more realistic."

"There has to be some assurance this is not going to open up a vast quagmire of trademark infringement," McLaughlin said.

Some frustrated critics, such as the Washington-based Domain Name Rights Coalition, contend that ICANN has been taken hostage by trademark holders and corporations, which generally oppose expanding Web addresses.

They argue that trademark disputes could become moot if there were sufficient number of alternative Web addresses with meaningful suffixes. Why, for instance, would Ford Motor Co. care who owned [www.ford.biz](http://www.ford.biz) if it were already guaranteed [www.ford.cars](http://www.ford.cars)?

"We would have thought this would have been its first priority," said the group's president, Mikki Barry. "It's all been couched in terms of, we can't do that until we make the trademark owners happy. The chartering of the new top-level domains is probably the most important thing ICANN has to deal with. They seem to be continually putting it on the back burner for

other things."

But even Post, a frequent critic of ICANN, said he doesn't believe the group to be acting irresponsibly in moving slowly on one of the most important issues facing the Internet today.

"I'm no friend of ICANN, but it is a complicated coordination," Post said. "This is the problem of problems for them. I can't in good conscience be screaming at ICANN that it's dragging its feet."

#### Congress Unit Raps Clinton Computer Security Plan

A White House plan to protect telecommunications, energy and other key systems from cyberattacks relies too much on detecting intrusions and not enough on improving security, a report by Congress' investigative arm said on Tuesday.

President Clinton last month proposed spending \$2 billion to eliminate computers' vulnerability to hackers and terrorists in key parts of government and private infrastructure.

But in a report to Congress, the General Accounting Office complained that the Critical Infrastructure Protection Plan favored elaborate means of detecting improper computer intrusions over making key systems more secure.

"Available tools and methods for analyzing network traffic and detecting intrusions are still evolving and cannot yet be relied on to serve as an effective 'burglar alarm,' as envisioned by the plan," the office said.

"The plan should place more emphasis on providing agencies the incentives and tools to implement the management controls necessary to assure comprehensive computer security programs," it said.

A GAO study released in October 1999 found significant computer security weaknesses at the 22 largest federal agencies.

Hackers, terrorists or even enemy nations could exploit such weaknesses and similar deficiencies in the private sector to cripple telephone networks, electric power grids or air traffic control systems.

At a hearing to review the Clinton plan, lawmakers issued grave warnings of vulnerabilities to information warfare.

"Our enemies don't need to risk confronting our powerful military if they can attack vulnerabilities in our critical information infrastructure," Sen. John Kyl, an Arizona Republican, said.

Kyl, who chairs the Judiciary Committee's terrorism subcommittee, which held the hearing, noted: "According to the National Security Agency, more than 100 nations are working on information warfare tactics. There have already been a disturbing number of attacks on U.S. information systems, exposing our Achilles' heel to any potential adversary."

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, a Democrat from California, warned that because the growth of interconnected computer systems, "society itself has become more, not less, vulnerable to terrorist threats."

Marc Rotenberg, executive director of the Electronic Privacy Information Center, criticized the proposed Federal Intrusions Detection Network, or FIDNET, as a violation of wiretapping and privacy laws.

"The designers of the plan are trying to apply 20th-century notions of national defense to 21st-century problems of communications security," Rotenberg told the hearing. "Such an approach will leave our networks ill-prepared to face the challenges of tomorrow."

John Tritak, who heads the White House project on infrastructure protection, defended the plan but noted that it was still a work in progress.

"This is version one," Tritak said. "Final solutions have not been presented."

Outlining 10 programs within the plan, Tritak said the government sought to identify weaknesses, detect possible threats, and create capabilities to respond to and recover from attacks.

#### Clinton Proposes \$2B Web Package

Warning that failure to bridge the "digital divide" between the rich and poor could exacerbate inequality in America, President Clinton on Wednesday offered a \$2 billion package to expand access to computers and the Internet.

"It would be tragic if this instrument that has done more to break down barriers between people than anything in all human history built a new wall because not everybody had access to it," Clinton told students, educators and high-tech executives gathered in the gymnasium of Ballou High School.

After a tour of the school's computer lab with America Online CEO Steve Case, the president outlined his plan for \$2 billion in tax incentives over 10 years, as well as \$380 million in expanded federal grants, to encourage the private sector to donate computers, sponsor community technology centers and train workers.

"Our big goal," he said, "should be to make connection to the Internet as common as connection to telephones is today."

Late last year, Clinton set a goal of connecting all Americans to the Internet, not just classrooms and libraries. "We should start by making sure that every community has a technology center that serves not just young people, but adults as well," he said.

The president also said he would lead a group of high-tech CEOs on a trip to impoverished areas in April as part of his "New Markets" initiative to direct investment to areas that haven't shared in the nation's good economic times.

"Now at a time when our country has the longest economic expansion in history," Clinton said, "we must close the digital divide."

The package included a request for \$10 million to prepare American Indians for careers in information technology and other technical fields. Members of the Oglala Sioux nation beseeched Clinton to boost job prospects in

their community during a stop at South Dakota's Pine Ridge Reservation on his first New Markets tour last year.

A Commerce Department report in July found that black and Hispanic households are only 40 percent as likely to have Internet access as white families.

And households with incomes of \$75,000 and above in urban areas are more than 20 times as likely to have Internet access as households at the lowest income levels.

Case, whose company and private foundation already are working with schools, private groups and government to widen access to computers, joined Clinton at Ballou and warned that "too many people are being left behind."

Case noted that there always have been a gap between the haves and have-nots.

"The real question that we face today is whether the Internet is going to widen that gap or close it," he said.

The administration says more than 50 percent of America's schools and over 80 percent of its classrooms are wired for the Internet. The goal is to have all schools connected by the end of this year.

Details of the plan Clinton was unveiling Wednesday include:

- \$150 million for training new teachers how to use new technologies.

- \$100 million to create 1,000 Community Technology Centers in low-income urban and rural neighborhoods.

- \$50 million for a pilot program to expand home access to computers and the Internet for low-income families.

#### Congress Mulls Ban on New Web Taxes

New state or local taxes that single out the Internet would be permanently banned under bipartisan legislation introduced Thursday in Congress, but the bill would not settle the difficult question of how existing sales taxes should apply to e-commerce.

The bill's main sponsors, Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., and Rep. Christopher Cox, R-Calif., said people on both sides of the sales tax debate agree the current three-year ban on new Internet taxes should be extended indefinitely.

"Our bill simply says you can't stick it to the online world," Wyden said. "We shouldn't discriminate against the most vibrant part of the economy."

The law enacting the temporary ban, which expires in October 2001, also created a congressional commission to recommend future tax policy for the Internet. Its report is due in April, and both Wyden and Cox said they expected one recommendation would be an extension of the ban on new taxes.

''The current hands-off tax policy is working," Cox said.

It is unlikely, however, that the advisory panel will reach consensus on how existing state sales taxes should apply to Internet commerce. Even if it did, Congress is reluctant in an election year to try to overturn a Supreme Court decision requiring a remote seller - catalog, Internet or otherwise - to have a physical presence in a state before that state can force it to collect and remit sales taxes.

In testimony this week to Congress, Michigan Gov. John Engler, like most governors a proponent of a new system to collect sales taxes from the Internet, agreed that other taxes should be banned on such things as Internet access.

''We should not impose new surcharges or access fees to this emerging technology," Engler, a Republican, told the Senate Budget Committee.

Several members of Congress are pushing a bill that would also permanently ban states from imposing sales taxes on e-commerce - a position central to the presidential campaign of Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz. - but other lawmakers prefer waiting until there is conclusive evidence about the Internet's impact on state government revenue. The sales tax now accounts for about \$150 billion in revenue to states, about two-thirds of their total take.

''What if they find that their revenue sources are coming up short?" said Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M. ''This hasn't happened yet, but if it does either other forms of state and local taxation will be needed, services will be reduced, or demands will be placed back on the federal government to make up the shortfall."

Congress may consider other Internet tax measures this year, including:

- Repeal of the 3 percent telephone excise tax, initially created to help finance the Spanish-American War and now seen by many as an extra cost that can hinder Internet access.

- Putting into law the Supreme Court decision, known as Quill, that governs remote sales and sales taxes. This would effectively maintain the tax status quo for e-commerce and catalog sales, and it could be done temporarily in case state revenues do start to erode.

- Defining exactly what the Supreme Court meant by ''nexus" in that Quill case - the requirement that a business have a physical presence in a state before that state can collect its sales tax. The Internet raises numerous questions about what that means, such as how to treat a web page, the location of a server or the location of an Internet provider.

''You can't stuff the new economy into a set of rules that were written for a smokestack economy," Wyden said.

#### Excite@Home, McAfee To Team On Firewall Software

Excite@Home is expected to announce Monday plans to offer its subscribers new security software from McAfee.com that protects them from malicious hackers, sources said.

The alliance is an attempt by Excite@Home, the nation's largest high-speed Internet access provider, to protect its cable modem subscribers from hackers who could try to penetrate a home PC network, delete information on computer hard drives, distribute viruses and even steal sensitive data such as credit card numbers.

Analysts are concerned that consumers with high-speed, or broadband, Internet access connections may face a security risk because their Internet connections are always on, meaning they don't have to log in each time they want to access the Net. Cable modems and digital subscriber lines (DSL) are the two leading methods of broadband connections.

Because broadband users' PCs have constant connections to the Web, analysts fear cable and DSL lines will become an attractive target for hackers.

According to sources, Excite@Home users will soon be able to download McAfee.com's new personal "firewall" software, which is software that protects sensitive data stored in PCs from being accessed by unauthorized people. McAfee's software will scan the data going in and out of the network and protect home PCs from hackers.

Theoretically, the new firewall can stop the email spamming that nearly caused Excite@Home subscribers to lose access to Usenet, a computer bulletin board system containing topic-specific messages. Last week, Usenet administrators nearly banned Excite@Home from the bulletin board after accusing its users of sending too much spam. The Internet access provider averted the ban after finding out that spammers surreptitiously used Excite@Home's network to send their email.

Representatives from Excite@Home and McAfee.com declined comment.

McAfee.com, a subsidiary of Network Associates, makes antivirus and security software. The software is available as a download from the Web.

Symantec, a McAfee.com rival, recently released similar firewall software called Norton Internet Security 2000.

Giga Information Group analyst Rob Enderle said it's critical for subscribers of cable and DSL services to protect themselves with personal firewall software.

"Otherwise, you're just playing Russian roulette," he said. "Someone can get access to your computer because they think it's funny. And if you have personal finance information on your hard drive, you don't know what they'll do."

The problem comes from a type of Internet marker called an "IP address." When a user logs on to the Net, they are assigned an "address." That marker helps information--such as email--get to its proper destination. But that same address can pinpoint the location of a user and possibly help a hacker gain unauthorized access to that user's network.

Many cable and DSL service providers are beginning to offer users randomly assigned Net addresses, or addresses that change constantly so as to make them harder to track. But those numbers are only randomly assigned each time a user turns off their computer, analysts say.

As a result, although Excite@Home offers randomly generated addresses,

subscribers still may be susceptible to hackers, analysts say. People with dial-up Internet access face less of a security risk because they generally stay logged online for less than a few hours at a time.

### Netscape-Sun Deliver On Linux

The Sun-Netscape alliance is finally living up to Netscape's longtime pledge to make Linux one of its core platforms.

The Sun-Netscape software alliance, dubbed iPlanet, is expected to ship Linux ports of its messaging and Web servers on Tuesday. The two servers join iPlanet's directory server as the Alliance's server products currently available on the open-source operating system.

As first reported by Sm@rt Reseller, several integrators were perplexed by the long-missing ports, which Netscape execs had promised through much of 1998.

Although Sun-Netscape officials wouldn't comment on the delay late last year, many speculated that the tricky fusion of the Sun and Netscape engineering teams tapped out the Alliance's resources.

According to an iPlanet official, demos of the Alliance's Linux ports will be on display at this week's LinuxWorld Expo show in New York.

### Faster, Cheaper Memory On The Horizon

A faster version of PC memory will start to appear in workstations and server computers toward the end of the year, a development that could present yet another challenge to the much-hyped Rambus memory technology.

Although the clamor isn't universal, a number of executives and analysts are predicting that the technology with an unwieldy name--Double Data Rate Dynamic Random Access Memory, or DDR DRAM--is in line to become the de facto standard for computer memory.

DDR DRAM has one major factor working in its favor: Because it is a derivative of current computer memory, most manufacturers and computer designers should be able to incorporate DDR DRAM chips fairly easily. In addition, it will likely be significantly cheaper than Rambus-based memory, assuming problems aren't encountered along the way.

Rambus has emerged as one of Silicon Valley's most controversial companies because of various delays, technical glitches and marketing problems that have disrupted the product plans for a number of partners. Rambus has designed a form of computer memory, called RDRAM, that supporters say will improve overall PC performance because it will deliver data to the processor at a much faster rate.

The company does not make memory chips. Rather, it licenses the design to memory makers and chipset manufacturers and collects royalties from these companies. Because of the promised performance benefits, chip giant Intel chose to base its future architectures around Rambus a few years ago, all but anointing it as the next standard.



Rambus' seemingly bright future darkened in September when Intel unexpectedly delayed its 820 chipset. The delay, the second, stunned many PC makers who had been counting on Camino to enable next-generation Rambus memory.

"We believe the momentum behind DDR will eclipse (Rambus)," said Sherry Garber, senior vice president at Semico Research. "In many cases, the (computer) designs can accommodate the shift very easily."

By the end of 2004, DDR will account for 50 percent of the market, she theorized, while Rambus will hold a relative sliver in the performance-PC space.

Rambus representatives did not return calls seeking comment.

If anything, interest among computer companies is growing. Advanced Micro Devices, ServerWorks, Via Technologies and other pro-DDR companies are talking about computers arriving this year containing the memory. Intel has said DDR memory will appear in servers containing its chips by 2001.

"You will see servers (using DDR) in the fourth quarter of this year, and I think you'll see desktops introduced in the third quarter," said Jim Sogas, director of the memory business unit at Hitachi Semiconductor, which introduced its DDR DRAM strategy last summer.

DDR is essentially a version of computer memory called SDRAM, but it processes data twice as fast. SDRAM chips being inserted into PCs today provide data to the processor at 100 MHz or 133 MHz. DDR runs at the same speed, but because it can cycle through twice the amount of data in the same period of time, it effectively functions at 200 MHz or 266 MHz.

Adoption of DDR will also prompt processor makers to speed up their system bus, an important data conduit. AMD is slated to boost the system bus associated with the Athlon processor to 266 MHz, while Intel will likely jump from 133 MHz to 200 MHz with its next-generation processor.

Speeding up data flow has been a pressing issue in PC design for years. Momentum initially built up around memory based on designs from Rambus because it promised to alleviate the bandwidth issues.

While Rambus memory does help improve data flow, it fails in other areas. For one, it has proven difficult and expensive to manufacture. The fastest Rambus memory chips, running at 800 MHz, remain in sporadic supply, a problem acknowledged both by computer industry sources and Rambus executives.

"They (computer makers) need the bandwidth and nobody seems to be happy with Rambus," said Keith Diefendorff, editor in chief of The Microprocessor Report.

Rambus memory is also expensive. Some chip dealers are currently selling 64MB of Rambus memory, an amount found in most PCs today, for \$496 and up. By contrast, 64MB of 133-MHz SDRAM can be purchased for \$69.

It will also cost a bit more to manufacture and test DDR DRAM, according to Dean Klein, vice president of integrated products at Micron Technology.

The technology is being aided by the support of chipset makers who will make ancillary products for DDR DRAM. Chipsets are the collection of chips

that connect the CPU with all the other parts of a computer.

AMD will match its Athlon processor with DDR DRAM toward the middle of the year. ServerWorks and Via are coming out with chipsets that will allow server makers to utilize DDR DRAM. An Intel representative said that servers containing Intel chips and DDR will hit by 2001, although the company remains committed to Rambus for performance desktops.

"There is going to be deep penetration into servers and workstations by the end of the year," said Kimball Brown, vice president of sales and marketing at ServerWorks.

Direct comparisons between Rambus and DDR can be deceiving. Rambus currently is targeted at high-end PCs, not at workstations and servers. DDR and Rambus memory, therefore, will compete indirectly at first.

### Intel's 'Willamette' Heats Up GHz Race

The race to -- and past -- 1 gig heats up in two weeks.

That's when Intel Corp. will lure developers to Palm Springs, Calif., for some winter golf and the semiannual Intel Developer Forum, where the company will unveil the latest in its processor technology.

The highlights will include two new processor architectures along with a new -- yet familiar -- one, Itanium.

"Willamette," the code name for Intel's next-generation desktop processor, will headline the show and will offer clock speeds of "well in excess of 1GHz," says Pat Gelsinger, vice president and general manager of Intel's Desktop Products Group.

Gelsinger and Albert Yu, senior vice president and general manager of Intel's Microprocessor Products Group, will give the keynote announcing the new chip.

Willamette is important to consumers because it represents the next step in processor technology from Intel. This is the chip that will power home computers that are linked, via a broadband connection, to the Web.

It should provide enough horsepower to handle high-frame-rate video streams and other multimedia applications that will be enabled by broadband.

Intel officials have been mum on other details, but the chip should be significant to consumers because it will replace Intel's Pentium III and bring 1GHz-plus speeds to the desktop by the end of the year. Intel's Pentium III chip will top out at about 1GHz in the second half of the year.

Willamette, however, is a brand-new 32-bit processor design, Intel's first such new design since introducing the Pentium Pro processor in late 1995. This core, referred to as the P6 core by Intel, has been the basis of every processor since then, including the Pentium III.

It is expected to be manufactured first using Intel's 0.18-micron process, as is also the case with the Itanium chip. Willamette is also expected to be a socketed chip, possibly for use with a 423-pin version of the current

Intel 370-pin socket, sources said.

The chip, in addition, is expected to include Willamette Processor New Instructions -- a new set of single instruction, multiple data or SIMD multimedia instructions. These instructions are used to help enhance the processing of certain multimedia data, such as video.

Willamette will be supported by a new chip set, code-named Tehama, which will support Rambus Direct RAM with a high-performance bus, which will be faster than the current 133MHz bus used with Pentium III, sources said. The bus acts like a pipeline for moving data between the processor and system components, such as memory. The faster it is, the more data a processor can move, increasing overall system performance.

The chip, which will be demonstrated at the forum, will be available before year's end for high-end desktop PCs.

Intel will also discuss its forthcoming Timna chip.

Timna, Intel's third new processor architecture, has been optimized to be very inexpensive. Timna will combine a Pentium processor core developed specifically for this low-cost market with a graphics engine and memory controller.

By combining these three functions into a single chip, Intel says it will lower PC makers' overall component costs and reduce the size of the motherboard needed for a Timna-based system, another cost-saving measure.

For Itanium, which has been widely discussed by Intel, the emphasis will be on software.

Intel has been working with developers, who need to port their software from 32-bit to 64-bit addressing in order to work with the server chip. Intel has said that systems using the Itanium will be available in the third quarter.

Also at the developers conference, Intel will disclose new design guides for PCs. Called PC2001, the design guides will incorporate, among other things, legacy-free elements. A legacy-free PC is one that has removed certain older components, such as the ISA bus, in favor of others.

Along with its new processor technologies and design guides, Intel will also introduce a number of new PC concepts at its developer form. The new concepts will be part of Intel's eHome and eBusiness exhibits. Intel uses these exhibits to show off concept PCs and appliances.

Not to be outdone, sources say that Advanced Micro Devices Inc. will set up shop across town in Palm Springs to brief developers and press on its own latest efforts.

AMD's 850MHz Athlon processor is slated for a mid-February launch. Athlon chips, introduced last August, utilize a 200MHz bus.

While the Pentium III chip will reach 1GHz in the second half of the year, so will Athlon. AMD, which is currently sampling a 900MHz Athlon processor, will reach 1GHz with Athlon in the second half. AMD is planning to introduce three new processor cores, code-named Spitfire, Thunderbird and Mustang, to help Athlon toward and then well past the 1GHz mark.

## Windows Gets 'Millennium' Name

The name of Microsoft's new consumer operating system, the successor to Windows 98 due out in the second half of this year, will be called Windows Millennium Edition.

The new software, dubbed ``Windows Me" by Microsoft insiders, will be the latest version of the operating system that powers the vast majority of personal computers.

``The name Windows Millennium Edition, or Windows Me, will help Microsoft clearly identify this as the next iteration of the OS designed for the home user," said Shawn Sanford, group product manager for Windows.

The company has said that Windows Millennium Edition will include software to view and edit digital video, along with updates to the Internet Explorer Web browser and other, undisclosed features.

Windows 98 and its predecessor, Windows 95, are the world's most popular software programs.

Microsoft will unveil its new business operating system, Windows 2000, on Feb. 17 at an event in San Francisco. Windows 2000 is aimed at corporate users and the large computers used to power Web sites and databases.

## Kodak Launches Digital Film Service

Eastman Kodak Corp., facing a growing Internet threat to its lucrative film business, plans a new service to encourage users of digital cameras to go to stores to process prints rather than doing it at home.

In a joint effort Thursday with Hewlett-Packard Co., Kodak will build new digital photo machines and install them in a range of retail stores. Picture takers can go to participating outlets, drop off memory cards from their digital cameras, and get higher quality prints than they can expect from home printers.

The venture, which won't be introduced until next year, helps address a main complaint about using digital cameras - that the quality of photos printed on typical home printers doesn't even come close to regular film.

``One of the advantages of digital photo finishing will be great pictures," said Robert Keegan, president of consumer imaging at Kodak.

Analysts say Kodak's move is an attempt to preserve its profitable film development business while also acknowledging the risk posed by new Web companies that offer convenient and cheap online services for processing digital photos.

The startups, launched in recent months with names like Shutterfly and Snapfish, let users simply zap their digital photos from a personal computer to the site, get them printed, and then mailed to them - without driving to the local store.

These Web sites answer the same complaint Kodak addresses - but also are

more convenient and often cheaper than developing film at a retail photo processor.

"The ability to have higher quality photo finishing is far more convenient to do online than driving to a store and picking it up," said Rob Enderle, an analyst with the Giga Information Group research firm.

Kodak "is trying to apply the old paradigm to the new model. But the new model favors electronic delivery," Enderle said.

Digital cameras still haven't reached mass market acceptance, with most users being photo professionals, hobbyists and technology aficionados. But the market is rapidly expanding as prices drop for high-quality digital cameras and printers, and as convenient Web services catch on.

About 4.7 million digital cameras were sold worldwide last year; unit sales should increase nearly fivefold to 22 million by 2003, said the International Data Corp. research firm.

Users are attracted to the ability to quickly download digital photos to the Internet and zap them to friends, families and co-workers. Images from traditional cameras must be scanned in before they can be sent to the Web.

Kodak has a piece of the growing digital camera market, but is hardly dominant. It ranked a distant second in U.S. sales of digital cameras last fall, with 20 percent of shipments, behind Sony with 35 percent, according to International Data.

Meanwhile, Kodak is trying to maintain the loyalty of the millions of consumers already accustomed to going to the store for photos. "You have an installed habit that's out there," said Riley McNulty, an analyst with International Data.

Kodak is moving tentatively into the Internet arena. Last year, the Rochester, N.Y.-based company launched its own Web site, PhotoNet Online, where users also can get prints of digital photos mailed to them, but the feature was tough to locate Thursday when a reporter tried to click to it.

And the option is more expensive than some other Web services, with photos costing up to three-and-a-half times more than ones sold at Shutterfly.com.

On Kodak's site, a 4-by-6 photo costs 75 cents, but only 49 cents on Shutterfly. Kodak's 5-by-7 lists for \$3.65 but only 99 cents on Shutterfly. Shutterfly also is offering a promotion for people where they can 200 prints for free.

Kodak stressed that the new equipment it will sell to retail outlets will cost less than the \$80,000-\$100,000 machines currently in use, encouraging more retail stores to install photo development machines and thus providing consumers more outlets for dropping off film. About 35,000 stores currently develop film, Kodak says.

Kodak and Hewlett-Packard said their joint venture will generate sales from \$500 million to \$1 billion by 2005, but declined to give specifics.

## Psion to Put the Internet in Your Pocket

Fully fledged wireless Internet edged closer on Monday when British palm-top computer group Psion Plc said it and U.S. Motorola Inc were developing mobile devices for launch in the first half of 2001.

"The intention is to put the Internet in the user's pocket," Chief Executive David Levin told reporters. "This will be full Web browsing as we understand it."

Full remote access at present requires a laptop computer linked to cellphone at best, while some wireless handsets can deliver a low-tech version of the Internet.

Levin predicted Psion's new format with integrated voice and data capabilities being developed with U.S. wireless telephone handset maker and communications group Motorola would quickly become a major global mass market.

"In a number of years' time everybody will have a pocket internet terminal. Inasmuch as the PC has spread and then the mobile phone has spread, so the pocket internet terminal will go the same way," he said.

Psion and Motorola have a joint team working on pocket Internet terminals, which will be based on next-generation Symbian technology. Development of the first product was progressing well," Psion said in a statement which did not details sums involved.

Levin was also reluctant to talk numbers and would only say: "This sort of endeavor has already been anticipated by the market in our forecasts for the coming year."

Shares in Psion closed 0.8 percent lower at 3,108 pence, having touched 3,200 pence earlier Monday.

It hit a record intraday high at 3,596 pence on January 18, having spent most of 1999 in a 700-1,000 pence range before rising sharply in the last quarter on investor hopes Psion would spearhead wireless Internet.

CSFB analyst Ian Burgess said the Motorola deal helped fulfil expectations and was excellent in three respects.

It provided Psion critical cellular technology just as wireless Internet was about to show dynamic growth; it improved Psion's position in North America where penetration had proved difficult in the past; and it underpinned Symbian as the core operating system of next generation devices.

"We reiterate our buy recommendation based on the improving position of both the hardware and operating system businesses in the shift to the wireless information world," he concluded.

Levin also said the Motorola move was an "important announcement for Psion. People have been wondering how we were going to make the move to take our devices forward. This is indicative of one of the routes forward that we have got."

The Motorola deal came 20 days after Psion unveiled a strategic Internet partnership with Vodafone AirTouch, which Levin said concerned a

different part of the food chain.

That chain is based on Symbian, the operating system developed mainly by Psion and now a consortium including Swedish Ericsson, Finnish Nokia Oyj, Japan's Matsushita Communication Industrial Co., and Motorola.

Psion shares were hit hard in early December when Ericsson, the world's biggest mobile telecom systems maker, unveiled a strategic partnership with all-conquering Microsoft.

Mobile Internet is a daunting task requiring the new Symbian operating system to be married up with developments in cellular technology and then integrating that bundle into a computer, "and doing so in a way the customer gets utility," Levin said.

While the machines will have integrated voice and data capabilities, free dictation is still some way off.

'I do not see natural language in this size of machine for some little while yet. The processors are not there, Levin said.

'Free dictation is a different thing to having a specified set of menu operations, which is technically feasible."

Whether or not users can talk to the first mobile Internet devices, initial interest could be limited to Web aficionados.

'We would be naive to presume that the very first major development out of the box is going to be the solution. It is going to take a number of generations and iterations to get there," Levin said.

#### California Woman Sues DoubleClick Over Privacy

A Californian woman filed suit [last] Thursday against DoubleClick Inc. accusing the Internet advertising company of unlawfully obtaining and selling consumers' private personal information, lawyers for the woman said.

DoubleClick could not immediately be reached for comment.

The lawsuit was filed in California Superior Court, Marin County, on behalf of Hariett Judnick and seeks to represent the state's general public, Ira Rothken, attorney with Rothken Law Firm, said in a statement.

The lawsuit, Judnick v. DoubleClick Inc., accuses New York-based DoubleClick of using computer technology to identify Internet users, track and record their Internet use and the Internet Web sites they visit, and obtain confidential and personal information about them without their consent.

The information obtained, the suit alleges, includes such items as names, addresses, ages, shopping patterns and histories and financial information, the lawyers said in a statement.

According to the lawsuit, DoubleClick has represented to the general public that it was not collecting personal and identifying information and that it gives privacy interests of Internet users paramount importance.

Last year, DoubleClick acquired Abacus Direct Corp. a direct-marketing services company, which maintains a database about the purchasing patterns of most American households.

The lawsuit contends DoubleClick then combined the power of its tracking technology with the information it acquired to create a means of collecting and cross-referencing private personal information without the knowing consent of Internet users.

The suit is asking the court to bar DoubleClick from using technology to collect personal information without the prior written consent of the Internet user.

### AOL Sued for Software Interference

Lawyers have filed a class-action lawsuit against America Online Inc., contending the latest version of its software interferes with customers trying to use rival Internet services.

The lawsuit, filed this week in U.S. District Court in Alexandria, Va., near AOL's corporate headquarters, says the company violated federal computer crime laws and Virginia's consumer-protection laws and caused damages "in the millions of dollars."

It seeks for each customer triple any actual damages, or \$1,000, whichever amount is greater.

AOL spokesman Rich D'Amato said Wednesday the claims carried "no basis in fact or law." He denied that version 5.0 of AOL's software prevents customers from connecting to the Internet using accounts with other providers.

"We've had very few complaints about this," D'Amato said.

But online discussion groups - including on AOL's own service - show scores of complaints by customers about problems they encountered after AOL's latest software upgrade. One technology trade publication suggested it was the "upgrade of death."

AOL has said previously that complaints about interference by its software were overblown and the result of customers not understanding that if they click "yes" during installation to allow AOL to become their default Internet browser, AOL largely takes over all the online functions on the computer.

"The 5.0 software provides users with the ability to select AOL as their default Internet connection, but only if they make the choice to do so," D'Amato said. "It's designed to provide a more stable online environment, but it doesn't prevent users from accessing the Internet through another provider."

Critics, including other Internet providers that compete directly with AOL, have complained that AOL's software can suddenly interfere with connections to rival Internet services or business accounts.

The lawsuit asks the judge to prevent AOL from distributing its latest



software ``without full disclosure of the effect of its operation on other software," and also urges the judge to require AOL ``to disgorge all of the monies it has earned from the distribution of version 5.0."

AOL announced Wednesday it reached 21 million subscribers. The lawyers have asked the judge to designate as plaintiffs the roughly 8 million subscribers who already have upgraded their software.

``Obviously, if someone had not suffered damage, principles of fair play would say there is no claim to compensation," said Fritz Schneider, a Maryland lawyer also involved in the lawsuit.

Part of the legal claims were filed under the auspices of a federal computer crimes law typically cited by U.S. attorneys prosecuting hackers.

``That act provides criminal and civil liability on anyone who alters the programs or use of a computer used in interstate commerce," said Lloyd Gathings, a Birmingham, Ala., lawyer involved in the case.

The lawsuit comes just weeks after AOL's announcement of its \$145 billion merger with Time Warner Inc., which includes plans to distribute the new software with Time Warner products, including its magazines, which draw 120 million readers.

#### Texas Instruments CEO Says PC Era Ending

Wireless Internet devices are now replacing personal computers as the driving force in the electronics industry, Texas Instruments' top executive said on Monday.

Tom Engibous, chief executive officer of Texas Instruments, which is investing heavily in computer chips used in mobile phones, said demand for wireless Internet devices will soar when they are permanently linked to the Internet via broadband networks.

Broadband frequencies allow high-capacity data transmission.

``Wireless Internet devices will not only capture some existing PC applications but introduce brand new applications that the desk-top PC has no way to handle today," Engibous told a Tokyo seminar on the company's strategy.

``I think the availability of a wireless device that is online all the time with broadband data capability...offers the possibility of applications that Silicon Valley" is just beginning to dream about, he added.

With next-generation mobile phone services, users will be able to surf the Web, check and respond to e-mail, conduct videoconferences and use new mobile services such as e-commerce, he said.

Next-generation mobile phone services will be offered in Japan beginning in the spring of 2001, and later in other parts of the world.

TI, the number one supplier of computer chips known as Digital Signal Processors (DSP) used in cell phones and other communications devices, earlier this month announced a 71 percent jump in its fourth-quarter net

income, aided by strong growth in mobile phones.

The Texas-based company has sold its loss-making dynamic random access memory (DRAM) chip business, focusing its resources on more stable and value-oriented DSP and analog chips.

It now holds about 47 percent of the world's programmable DSP market. That market is expected to grow 30 percent annually over the next five years, according to the research firm Forward Concepts.

Besides wireless handsets, Engibous said he sees large demand for DSP chips for use in modems providing broadband connectivity at home, and new consumer electronics products such as digital cameras and Internet audio devices.

### Where To Find Info About Web Sites

Q: I spotted something on the Internet that I am interested in buying, but I have never heard of the cybershop where it is being sold. Is there anyway to find out information about the reliability of a particular online merchant?

A: There are some easy ways to gather data that should help you decide whether a Web site is reputable. Such information can be drawn from a company's Web site as well from outside rating services.

With thousands of e-retailers crowding the Web these days, it is no wonder that shoppers are overloaded with options.

For instance, someone searching the Internet for a Palm V hand-held computer will come up with dozens of different e-retailers to buy from. At first glance, the only thing that differentiates the sites is the price of the product.

But experts say that shoppers shouldn't base their purchases only on price. Some merchants who discount heavily add on steep shipping costs or take their time in delivering the goods.

To find out if an online merchant is OK to buy from, you should start by browsing around its Web site. Check out the site's return and shipping policies and look at whether there are easy ways to contact the company by e-mail or phone. Also, look for a reliability seal from the Better Business Bureau, which signals a merchant has strong business practices.

You also might want to think about whether the site looks professional: Is it easy to navigate? Are the pictures and graphics high-quality?

If these things aren't up to par, it may be worth taking your business elsewhere.

For more in depth information, you can turn to those companies that rank online merchants. They base their findings on a wide range of categories including customer support, on-time delivery and price.

The best-known is BizRate.com. Online stores cannot pay to be listed on its site.

BizRate.com collects its data by asking shoppers at hundreds of different Web sites to fill out a survey after they buy something. The survey focuses on all aspects of their shopping experience. Shoppers can also agree to be surveyed again after their purchase arrives at their home.

BizRate.com then analyzes the customer feedback and ranks the site.

For instance, a shopper who searches on the BizRate.com for a Palm V computer comes up with a list of 60 stores that offer that product. Electronics retailer Outpost.com had the highest rating, with four and a half stars. Its service and delivery levels were especially strong.

On the flip side, TC Computer was last on the list, with three stars. Its prices, customer support and shipping were average.

The survey results are listed on the BizRate.com Web site, as well as through a number of Internet search engines, such as Microsoft's MSN ([www.msn.com](http://www.msn.com)), Alta Vista ([www.altavista.com](http://www.altavista.com)) and Go2Net ([www.go2net.com](http://www.go2net.com)).

In addition, e-retailers can use the BizRate.com information on their sites as an advertisement for quality service, selection and prices.

Another resource for merchant and product information is ConsumerReports.org, which charges \$3.95 a month to subscribe to the wealth of data drawn from its thousands of studies.

The site also has an e-ratings section, which ranks about 50 of the most popular merchants on the Web today that sell books, music, toys, electronics and appliances as well as those cybershops linked to catalog companies. Bizrate.com information is also available on ConsumerReports.org.

In addition, many of the online search engines such as Lycos offer reviews from shoppers about their experiences with different Web sites.

#### Some Web Users Expect Cash To Surf

In what may sound like an online version of paradise to some, millions of Internet users are getting cash simply for surfing the Web.

One of the leading pay-to-surf services, All Advantage, hit 4 million subscribers in December after less than nine months in operation. Another company is going one step further by introducing a service that pays people to read e-mail.

Of course, there's a catch. To receive payments, Web users must endure lots of advertisements. They must also give personal information and let the services monitor where they go.

"We're very upfront about the fact that we track them," said Keith Smith, founder of ePipo, which offers \$30 for 50 hours of surfing each month.

He said anyone wanting privacy can temporarily turn off the tracking device - but they won't get paid for the time. So far, he said, demand has outstripped advertising, forcing the service to limit new subscribers.

For many Web users, the cash payments make up for the ads and loss of privacy.

Brad Livermore, a Kansas City, Mo., computer programmer who signed up for a dozen pay-to-surf services, said the information he gave up is probably already available elsewhere.

"Most people are already surfing the Web anyway, and now they can get money for it," Livermore said. He got his mother and sister to sign up as well and already received two checks of about \$30 each.

The pay-to-surf services make their money on advertising.

Advertisers can use the services to target their message to individual computer users based on their income, location and interests. Advertisers hope that by targeting ads, more Web users will actually click on them and buy products instead of treating them like background noise.

"Now, you can look at a lot of pages, and you don't always see that ad," said Jeff Fortune, whose company produces a weekly motor sports TV show and sells ads for it. "Even if they do see your name and are aware of it, they don't necessarily react to it."

Fortune's company became one of the first to advertise with Yo Yo Mail, which will offer free e-mail accounts and pay subscribers to read ads that arrive via e-mail. The service was being launched Tuesday.

Tom Landau, Yo Yo vice president for business development and marketing, said such services represent the next step in Internet's evolution.

Web users previously willing to pay for Internet access and services now expect free or low-cost options. Soon, Landau said, they will come to demand payments for spending time on the Net.

To sign up for Yo Yo, users must give their age, education level, marital status and address. They also must state whether they own a home or have a credit card. Yo Yo will pay 5 cents for each ad read.

Other services request similar information. Ads arrive in a window that cannot be closed without losing payments, and the computer user must show signs of active surfing.

However, hackers have devised a program, Fake Surf, to mimic surfing and allow subscribers to get paid by leaving their Internet browser on overnight. They can reach their monthly surfing limits in just a few nights and spend the rest of the time ad-free.

The services typically pay a set amount for each hour of surfing, plus bonuses for referrals. For example, All Advantage pays 50 cents per hour initially. The user also gets 10 cents for each hour a friend uses the service and 5 cents for each hour that friend's friend surfs. Subscribers can earn a hundred dollars or more each month that way.

But the referral system also has generated a lot of complaints.

"I get between five to 15 e-mails a week from people trying to get me to subscribe," said John Groseclose, a product manager in Scottsdale, Ariz. He has since set his computer program to automatically delete anything containing the words "All Advantage."

## Freemac Reinvents Itself After Apple's iMac Snub

How hard can it be to give away free iMac computers? Pretty hard, if Apple won't let you.

That's the bitter pill that Jonathan Strum, president of Freemac, has had to swallow. Last year, the start-up announced that it intended to give away 1 million of the popular Apple iMac computers during the next two years.

That ambition has died because Apple decided not to let Freemac buy any iMacs to give away, not even at full retail price, Strum told CNET News.com in an interview. Apple declined to comment.

"What we're telling our customers--well over a million people who signed up--is that Apple won't let you have a free computer," said Strum. As a recourse, Freemac is reinventing itself and will be relaunched later this month as "NadaPC.com" and will give away Internet access terminals instead.

"Starting this week, we're letting customers know what happened (and offering them) first crack at getting a new Internet appliance," Strum said. The terminals will be supplied by either Intel, Acer or Merinta, although details on the supplier have not been finalized, according to Strum.

Perhaps he'll get the agreement in writing this time.

Freemac was born out of the "free PC" movement that kicked off last year. Under its business plan, qualified customers would get a free iMac if they agreed to a three-year Internet service provider (ISP) contract with EarthLink and agreed to accept advertising.

Strum said he received a verbal approval from a regional sales manager at Apple, who ostensibly got an authorization from executives at the Cupertino, Calif., headquarters. On these words, Freemac, which had fewer than five employees at the time, according to the company phone system, was launched in August.

Trouble, however, soon cropped up. The day after Freemac's highly publicized launch at an investment banking conference in San Francisco, Mitch Manditch, Apple's senior vice president of worldwide sales, called to tell Strum that Apple wasn't aware of the company, Strum said. In any case, Manditch told Strum that Freemac wasn't authorized to redistribute iMacs.

Strum claims that apart from lower-level managers in distribution, he was in contact several times with Apple to see if Steve Jobs, the company's chief executive, might make an appearance at his company's launch. Steve Jobs didn't appear that day, and ultimately, neither did the iMacs.

Following the company's launch, Freemac went through a more official review process to carry Apple's products. Apple declined to let Freemac buy its computers at wholesale prices from distributor Ingram Micro.

Strum said that he then offered to limit distribution of computers to non-Apple owners to preclude any potential loss of revenue Apple might

experience. That way, iMacs would only be going to first-time users or users with a PC, with the end result still being expanded market share for Apple, he said. Still, Apple didn't bite.

Strum subsequently upped the offer and said Freemac was willing to buy the computers at full retail price from retailers, which at the time was around \$1,200 each. Still, Apple by December decided not to let the company go ahead with that plan, either.

According to an email Strum received from Apple, which CNET News.com obtained a copy of, the company said its contract with resellers restricts sales to end users only, meaning the computers can't be redistributed by Freemac. Strum, as one might expect, thinks that argument doesn't wash because a corporate customer buying from a CompUSA redistributes products to employees.

"The notion that Apple is a heroic David to Microsoft and Intel's Goliath couldn't be further off the mark," said a perturbed Strum. "Apple has the most proprietary position in terms of distribution, bar none."

Strum said he didn't imagine that the arrangement with Apple could go awry, though no contract had been signed. He said all of his deals with other companies got signed, but that sometimes arrangements run ahead of the actual signing of documents.

Strum said the company's business model will remain essentially the same. Like it's predecessor, NadaPC.com will profit from advertising and e-commerce revenue, as well as by signing on subscribers for EarthLink's Internet service. NadaPC.com is banking on building a "community" of like-minded users who hopefully will actually buy products online.

#### Top 10 World Wide Web Destinations

The top 10 properties and networks on the World Wide Web for December 1999, based on the number of different or unique visitors, as reported by Internet survey company MediaMetrix:

1. America Online - 53.8 million unique visitors.
2. Yahoo! - 42.4 million.
3. Microsoft - 40.5 million.
4. Lycos - 30.3 million.
5. ExciteAtHome - 27.7 million.
6. Go Network (go.com) - 21.3 million.
7. Amazon.com - 16.6 million.
8. NBC Internet - 14.9 million.
9. About.com - 12.6 million.
10. Time Warner - 12.2 million.

## Hate America Online? Join the Web Club

America Online may be the world's No. 1 Internet service, but it's also a big target for anger and vitriolic abuse spewed across the Net.

Bad feelings have intensified since America Online's mid-January announcement of a merger with media giant Time Warner Inc., said Berkeley, Calif., area free-lance writer David Cassel, who has been keeping an eye on AOL since 1994.

America Online, or AOL for short, has stirred feelings -- pro and con -- for years by mailing out tons of free floppy disks and compact discs allowing people to hook up quickly and easily to the Internet.

But some members have rebelled, complaining on various Web sites about AOL's strict policies barring offensive language and links to some sites along with busy signals users encounter when they try to dial into the service.

One user contacted by telephone likened AOL to the "Disney" version of the Internet: packaged, sanitized and inoffensive.

Part of the debate dances around the freedom of speech issue. Is the Dulles, Va., titan, with 20 million-plus subscribers, creating a simple, family-oriented way of surfing the Net? Or is it poised to stunt the natural growth of the Internet by reducing opportunities for people to voice opinions and view anything they chose?

Cassel, who boasts a readership of about 50,000 for his online newsletter (<http://www.aolwatch.org/listsab.htm>), is concerned about the company's control over the Internet -- and increasingly, over popular media.

On the heels of the AOL deal, Time Warner turned around and vowed to tie the knot with music company EMI Group Plc.

"We're at the fork in the road, and I worry about the fork where AOL dominates," Cassel said in a telephone interview. "I want the Internet to remain free and open."

AOL spokesman Rich D'Amato says the company believes in a family-friendly, safe and secure Internet community. He points to the automatic renewal of AOL's subscribers as proof of happy customers.

"We focus on the opinions of our members and the way that they express those (by) continuing each month with us," D'Amato said.

Anti-AOL sites abound, no matter which search engine one uses to look for them.

A well-viewed one is the so-called Super Site, which is "dedicated to the demise of the most horrible online service on the entire information super highway, AOL!" (<http://home.earthlink.net/~jeffh99708/aolsucks>)

Contributors express anger about the company -- nicknamed AOHELL by some -- after attempting to use and even disconnect from the service.

"I now use my AOL start-up CD as a drink coaster," one said.

The site allows visitors to beat up on a picture of AOL Chairman Steve Case with the click of a mouse, giving him black eyes and a bloodied face.

Some anti-AOL'ers are rooting for Madeline Sabol, a self-published author who spent more than three years and at least \$10,000 producing a book entitled ``You've Got Male." (<http://www.youve-got-male.com>) -- only to be threatened with a lawsuit by AOL.

Last July, Sabol, whose self-help women's book focuses on dealing with love and heartache through the Internet, found herself tangling with AOL once it decided her title had infringed on the company's trademark of its well-known phrase, "You've Got Mail."

``I was scared to death, and I got so much support," Sabol, who works part-time for an airline, told Reuters. Some backers have sent Sabol e-mail at her Denver-area base, asking her to stand up to AOL and help stop big companies from bullying little people.

AOL's D'Amato said the company has a right to defend its trademarks.

Web sites that allow consumers to rant and rave are all the rage these days, said Rick Broadhead, Internet book co-author and creator of the syndicated cartoon e-Trivia. ``There's all kinds of anti-corporate sites out there."

Broadhead adds: ``With 20 million (AOL) customers, there's bound to be a percentage of customers that are unhappy."

==~==~==

Atari Online News, Etc. is a weekly publication covering the entire Atari community. Reprint permission is granted, unless otherwise noted at the beginning of any article, to Atari user groups and not for profit publications only under the following terms: articles must remain unedited and include the issue number and author at the top of each article reprinted. Other reprints granted upon approval of request. Send requests to: [dpj@delphi.com](mailto:dpj@delphi.com)

No issue of Atari Online News, Etc. may be included on any commercial media, nor uploaded or transmitted to any commercial online service or internet site, in whole or in part, by any agent or means, without the expressed consent or permission from the Publisher or Editor of Atari Online News, Etc.

Opinions presented herein are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the staff, or of the publishers. All material herein is believed to be accurate at the time of publishing.